



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
10 W. JACKSON BLVD.
CHICAGO, IL 60604

NEWS RELEASE

INS and Field Museum Host Adoption Ceremony for 17 Children from Around the World

Chicago, IL, April 24, 2001. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), along with The Field Museum, joined today in welcoming the newest and youngest United States citizens in a memorable ceremony. Seventeen children, ranging in the ages of 2 to 7, were sworn-in as United States citizens in the presence of proud family members. The countries represented today included China, Guatemala, India, Thailand, Korea, Kazakhstan, Dominican Republic, Romania, Albania, and Bulgaria.

The ceremony was held at the Marae Gallery of The Field Museum. The Maori are native to New Zealand and developed meeting houses where people of all backgrounds met. The Maori house symbolizes a coming together of cultures. "The INS is very happy to hold such a special ceremony at the Field Museum," said Brian R. Perryman, Chicago INS District Director. "These children have been given the opportunity today to become a part of this wonderful nation and I am honored to have participated in this event."

The children raised their right hands as they recited the children's oath of allegiance, with the help of their parents and grandparents. As a special treat, the children's choir from Walt Disney Magnet School was invited to sing "It's a Small World" and "The Rainbow Connection".

"It is especially fitting that the final children's ceremony takes place at The Field Museum", said John McCarter, President and CEO of The Field Museum. "Our mission is to embrace the cultural differences among us and tell the stories that make America a vibrant nation."

This citizenship ceremony was inspired by the current photographic exhibit, "Between Cultures: Children of Immigrants in America," by Gina J. Grillo, on display in the Marae Gallery through May 6, 2001.

This may be the last adoption ceremony held in the INS Chicago district due to a change in law on February 27, 2001 that affords automatic United States citizenship to adopted children. In fiscal year 2001 (October 1, 2000 to present) the Chicago INS office has completed 675 citizenship applications for adopted children.

###